

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9145

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15131

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, XJ

SUBJECT: SOVIET MEDIA COVERAGE ON AFRICA RESUMES

1. SUMMARY. CRITICAL SOVIET MEDIA COVERAGE OF SECRETARY'S AFRICA TRIP AND U.S. POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA RESUMES AFTER UNUSUAL TWO DAY LULL. SOVIETS ARE CAREFUL, HOWEVER, NOT TO SPECULATE ON SMITH STATEMENT AND POSSIBLE BLACK AFRICAN LEADERSHIP REACTION TO IT. PERSONAL TREATMENT OF SECRETARY SEEMS SOMEWHAT EASED IN COMPARISON TO PAST INVECTIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING UNUSUAL CESSATION OF TRIP-RELATED COVERAGE IN CENTRAL PRESS SEPT 23-24, IZVESTIYA (SEPT 24) AND KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (KZ) (SEPT 25) WEIGH IN WITH LENGTHY, SIGNED ARTICLES HIGHLY CRITICAL OF SECRETARY'S TRIP AND U.S. POLICY. SEPT 25
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PRAVDA, HOWEVER, CARRIES NO TRIP-RELATED COVERAGE AND CRITICAL

TASS ENGLISH WIRE SERVICE ARTICLE ON TRIP (TASS6-18, NEW YORK, SEPT 24) IS NOT PRINTED IN CENTRAL PRESS.

3. ASSUME DEPT HAS FBIS TEXT OF B. PILYATSKIN "INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY" ARTICLE IN IZESTIYA AND V. YORDANKIY ARTICLE IN KZ. EMBASSY NOTES THAT BOTH ARTICLES--WHILE HIGHLY CRITICAL--REFRAIN FROM SPECULATING ON SMITH STATEMENT OR POSSIBLE BLACK LEADERSHIP REACTION TO IT. ARTICLES FOCUS ON "SAFER" THEMES SUCH AS U.S. HYPOCRISY, SMITH-VORSTER INTRANSIGENCE, AND IMPORTANCE OF RHODESIA-SOUTH AFRICA-NAMBIA IN NATO-IMPERIALIST SCHEME OF THINGS.

4. WHILE SECRETARY IS NOT SPARED CRITICISM FOR HIS LEADING ROLE IN ARTICULATION AND EXECUTION OF "NEFARIOUS" U.S. POLICY, INVECTIVE LEVEL IS SOMEWHAT SUBDUED IN COMPARISON WITH EARLIER COMMENTARY PARTICULARLY THAT OF EARLY SEPTEMBER. NASTY SOVIET THEME OF SETTING UP COMPARISON BETWEEN DEATH AND DESTRUCTION IN LEBANON AS A RESULT OF U.S. ME DIPLOMACY WITH SIMILAR U.S. AFRICA EFFORT IS ABSENT.

5. EMBASSY INTERPRETS SOVIET SILENCE OF SEPT 23-24 AND RE-HASH OF ANTI-U.S. CRITICISM OF SEPT 25 AS AN EFFORT TO MARK TIME PENDING SOVIET EVALUATION OF BLACK LEADERSHIP REACTION TO CHANGED SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. IN ADDITION, SOVIETS HAVE GENERAL AVERSION TO GETTING OUT AHEAD OF THEIR "CLIENTS", AND THEY MAY FEEL THEY HAVE MADE THIS MISTAKE WITH REGARD TO THE BLACK RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S EFFORTS.
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